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## Legacy - December 1997

South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology--University of South Carolina

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# Legacy

South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology

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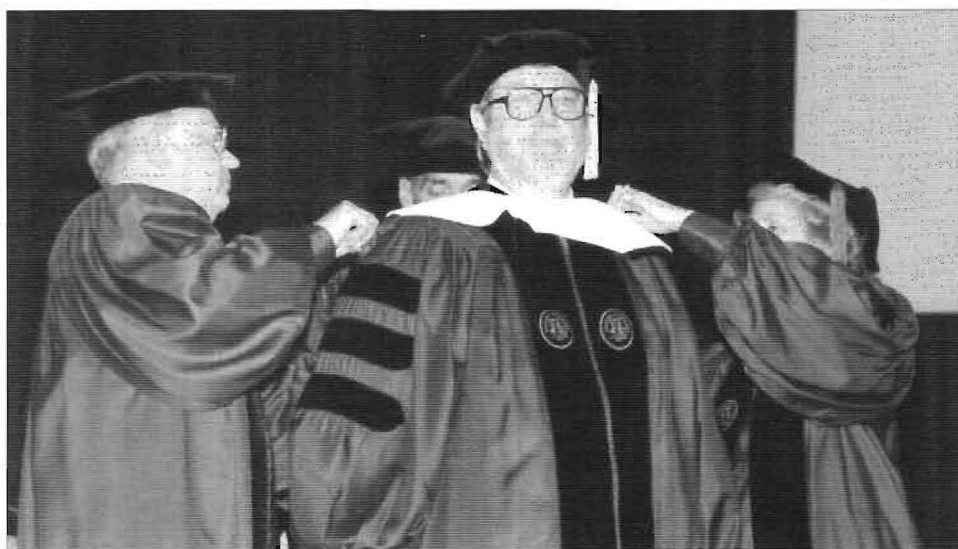
## Stanley Austin South Recognized by the University of South Carolina with a Honorary Doctor of Humanities Degree

On August 9, 1997, Stanley Austin South, Research Archaeologist at the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, was recognized and presented with the honorary degree of Doctor of Humanities by USC's President John M. Palms and the Board of Trustees. This recognition was a great honor not only for Stanley but for the entire staff at the Institute. We are all very proud of Stanley for his accomplishments, for his pioneering efforts in the field of historical archae-

ology, for his tireless research at important archaeological sites in South Carolina that have brought national and international attention to the state, and for his long and productive career that has burnished the reputation of the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of South Carolina.

Stanley Austin South, an archaeologist whose achievements during a 42-year career include some of the most important historical discoveries in South Carolina,

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Stanley Austin South receiving his hood. (University photo)

# Vista

By Bruce Rippeteau, Director and State Archaeologist

**Legacy, published three times a year, is the newsletter of the SC Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina**  
**Bruce Rippeteau, Director**  
**Nena Powell Rice, Editor**

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Many thanks to all who helped put on yet another successful, appreciated, and excellent South Carolina Archaeology Week. It was all grand! I appreciate the fine work of Martha Zierden of the Charleston Museum and Eric Poplin of Brockington and Associates at the opening "Symposium on Mt. Pleasant Archaeology" held on Saturday, September 27, which was the kick-off program for the 6th Annual Archaeology Week. I also appreciate all the organizers of over 65 programs during South Carolina Archaeology Week throughout the state and especially Leslie Drucker's coordination of the 10th Annual Archaeology Field Day, sponsored by the Archaeological Society of South Carolina and the SC Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, which occurred on Friday and Saturday, October 3-4 at Sadlers Creek State Park in the Upstate.

I would also like to recognize a very special contribution to South Carolina archaeology by Mr. George Lewis, a retired Department of Army forester in Aiken. George has long advanced archaeology by his post-retirement employment (largely at SCIAA's Savannah River Archaeological Research Program at the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site) and by his hard work for avocational matters. For example, George was a very active President of the Archaeological Society of South Carolina. In the last year, George, by his advocacy and tact, has

entreated Federal Paper Board Company (now International Paper), Georgia Pacific, Rayonier, Inland Container Corporation, Weyerhaeuser, Resource Management Service of John Hancock, and Union Camp Corporations to treat their archaeological properties on their vast holdings as important and worthy of protection from looters, as company policy. Our cheers to you George, and to the forest product companies of South Carolina for these great efforts.

Florence has been in the Institute's eye lately, for the continuing archaeological and historical interest of local, Institute-licensed hobby divers, and for our long-term relations with past State Senator, the Honorable Nick Ziegler. Also, recently Deputy State Archaeologist Jon Leader, with the help of the Underwater Division's on-land expertise, has delineated the outlines of the infamous Civil War "Florence Stockade" prisoner of war



Bruce Rippeteau, Director and State Archaeologist.  
(Photo by Daryl P. Miller)

camp. Jon's work has been reported in the Florence news to very positive effect. Also regarding Florence, I would note the closing of the Florence Air and Space Museum, and that I met with Lt. Colonel Geoffrey Hayes of the US Air Force Museum in Ohio during the early September's disbursement of collections.

As an Airport Commissioner, I am organizing a rescue of the Old Curtiss Wright Hangar at the Columbia Downtown Airport. This structure was

nominated to the National Register of Historic Places by USC history student, Debbie King, an employee of the SC State Museum, and we have quite a task force of city and county-elected officials, government, and citizens helping out.

I would also like to note and welcome Roger Stroup's recent appointment as the new director of the SC Department of Archives and History (and State Historic Preservation Officer), and to thank the SC Department of Transportation's Environmental Section Chief Paul Embler at his retirement at the end of October. Roger, we are going to continue the great relationship between our agencies and with Tony Ganong at your old haunts at the State Museum. And Paul: thanks for your support of archaeology and inter-agency cooperation, and to Blanch Sproul, best of luck carrying-on in Paul's position as we jointly work with you and your important SCDOT mission.



Paleoindian barbecue hosted by David G. Anderson and Jennalee Muse in May at their home in Williston, South Carolina, at the conclusion of the Allendale Paleoindian Expedition. (Photo by Daryl P. Miller)

Among the positive comments on the last *Legacy* issue (especially thank you JM), one reader from New York, having enjoyed it, asked about my last issue's *Vista* literary quotation. I would like to share my note back to him that: Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (AD 121-180; and not to be confused with another emperor: Aurelian, AD ca. 215-275) was an historically important emperor of Rome. Keeping some of his harsh treatments of early Christians and some treasury matters in perspective, Marcus Aurelius is now considered to have been among the best, most benevolent, and noblest of the Roman supreme leaders.

Over his life, he wrote down in notes and letters what amounts to personal proverbs, or "reflections," possibly for his son and successor emperor Commodus, as advice and ethical directives. Actually he wrote these in Greek, and his philosophy in these "meditations," as they now have become known, by his training and by his experience, was stoical. Marcus

Aurelius' "Meditations," always known in various fragments, were assembled and given a comprehensive and annotated context first in the modern era by Xylander in Zurich in 1558. There were lots of versions by 1700, and the most well known today remains George Long's 1909 translation: *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius*.

After this bit of archaeology and history, I would end this *Vista*, therefore, with a second quote from Aurelius. Although needing a shaker full of salt for the modern non-emperor manager, it still brings a certain peace to one's work place:

*I do my duty: other things  
trouble me not;  
for they are either things  
without life, or  
things without reason,  
or things that have rambled  
and know not the way.*





# Research

**REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN FOR THE 1998  
ALLENDALE PALEOINDIAN EXPEDITION  
The Search for Ice Age Inhabitants of South Carolina  
An Excavation Program for Members of the Public  
May 5 - 30 , 1998**

Some 12,000 years ago the earliest human beings known in North America made their way from the Siberian area of Russia into what is now South Carolina. Field research conducted by the Institute over the past 12 years in the area of Allendale County, South Carolina has revealed abundant archaeological evidence of these early people. The Allendale Paleoindian Expedition is a program of excavation where members of the public can register for a week to participate in the excavation of scientifically important sites. No prior experience is necessary. Participants take part in an archaeological dig learning about excavation techniques, artifact identification, and Paleoindian prehistory. Evening programs consist of lectures by staff archaeologists and by visiting archaeologists and other scientists.

The Expedition will be in the field for four weeks. Each session begins on Tuesday morning and ends the following Saturday afternoon. Applicants may register for one or more weeks between May 5 and May 30. This year the expedition will return to the Clovis-age Big Pine Tree site and continue excavation of the Charles site, both located along Smiths Lake Creek in Allendale County, South Carolina. Underwater archaeology will also be conducted by SCIAA's Underwater Archaeology Division searching for inundated chert quarries in Smith Lake Creek.

The 1998 staff includes Dr. Al Goodyear, Project Director; Tommy Charles, Paleoindian specialist, SCIAA archaeologist, and excavator of the Charles site; Christopher Amer, Head of the SCIAA Underwater Division and his entire staff; Brinnen Carter of the University of Florida; Sean Maroney of USC; and graduate students from various universities.

The registration cost for an individual is \$366 a week. A book and t-shirt are included. Lunch and supper are provided as part of the fee with a catered evening meal. Participants can camp for free at the expedition base camp which includes a screened-in kitchen-dining facility, indoor bathrooms, and hot shower. Each participant must provide their own tent and bedding. Motels are available within 25 minutes of the site for those not wanting to camp. \$300 of the registration cost is tax-deductible.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO REGISTER CONTACT:**

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## SOUTH, From Page 1

was born February 2, 1928, in Boone, North Carolina.

Following a stint in 1945 as a U. S. Navy seaman, South earned a bachelor's degree in education from Appalachian State Teachers College and taught science and social studies at Proximity Junior High School in Greensboro, North Carolina.

In 1955, he began his career in archaeology at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, where he earned a master's degree in anthropology in 1959. During this time, South became an archaeologist for the North Carolina Department of Archives and History.

South joined the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology at USC in 1969 as a research professor and archaeologist. Since then, he has excavated more than 16 sites in the state, including Charles Towne Landing, Fort Moultrie, the University of South Carolina Horseshoe, and, on Parris Island, the 16th-century Spanish colonial town and

forts of Santa Elena—Spain's one time capital of the New World. With fellow Institute archaeologists, South discovered the site of Charlesfort, the first European attempt at settlement in the New World, predating even St. Augustine.

The Charlesfort discovery, near Beaufort, South Carolina, was cited by *Discovery* magazine as one of the top 100 science stories of 1996, and a story about the discovery of the 16th-century fort appeared on the front page of *The New York Times*.

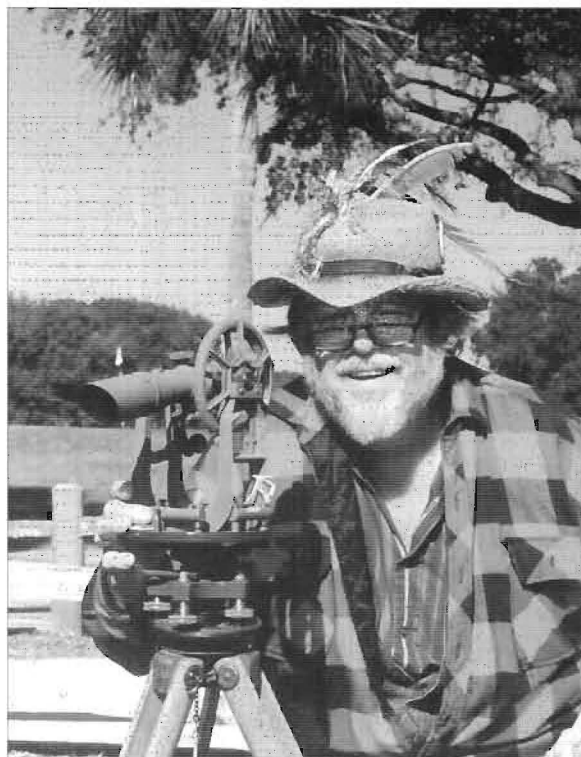
These and other excavations and resulting findings have garnered more than \$1 million in funding support from the National Geographic Society, the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Explorer's Club of New York, among others.

From the beginning of his archaeological career, South has been a pioneer in the field of historical archaeology, which seeks to validate and add to the body of knowledge found in written historical records. Through research and numerous research papers, South established

credibility in the concept that searching for historical architectural ruins and their artifacts can produce an important database for history.

South founded the Conference on Historic Sites Archaeology in 1960 and continues to edit the series *Volumes in Historical Archaeology*. His book, *Method and Theory in Historical Archaeology*, is among the first of its kind in the field. It and another book, *Research Strategies in Historical Archaeology*, continue to be widely used references for professional archaeologists.

In addition to being an honorary guest lecturer in several countries, South has received numerous professional honors, including the J. C. Harrington Medal for outstanding scholarly achievement in historical archaeology from the Society for Historical Archaeology and the Robert L. Stephenson Lifetime Achievement Award from the Archaeological Society of South Carolina.



Stanley South at the Santa Elena/Charlesfort site on Parris Island near Beaufort, SC in 1997. (Photo by Chester B. DePratter)



Lewis Binford and Stan South shown here in a photo which appeared in *Newsweek*, July 4, 1955 (page 76). Digging a feature on the bank of the Roanoke River, they uncovered a hearth feature that dated to 8,000 years ago. (Photo by Sebastian Sommer)

# A Stallings Twilight

By Kenneth E. Sassaman

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the fifth in a series of five articles dealing with Stallings Culture.

After a long history of development and florescence, the prehistoric Stallings Culture of the middle Savannah River valley came to a screeching halt. Its demise at about 3,500 years ago was indeed abrupt, seemingly catastrophic. The timing of this event is certain, but its circumstances or causes are poorly understood. How and why one of the region's most celebrated hunter-gatherer societies met its end is one of South Carolina's great archaeological mysteries.

Actually, the bearers of Stallings Culture never disappeared, they simply started doing things differently, and in different places. Most notably, sites along the Savannah River were completely abandoned for a new life in the adjacent hill country. The ensuing pattern of upland settlement involved much smaller and more dispersed communities than those of classic Stallings times. Technology and stylistic expression changed, too. Lacking as they did the opportunities and demands of a river way-of-life, descendants of Stallings Culture adapted their toolkits and labor arrangements to their new surroundings.

Acknowledging that life carried on in new ways for the once insular and stationary Stallings people hardly satisfies curiosity about the reasons for this change. Were riverine communities forced from their homes by severe weather, perhaps flooding

or drought? Did they seal their own fate by overtaxing the very resources on which they had come to depend? How about relations with neighboring groups? Were they at war or at peace? What about nutrition and disease, or labor relations?

Possible causes for the demise of Stallings Culture are many. Conclusive evidence is not so plentiful. So far, no obvious traces of environmental disaster have been uncovered. I doubt that such evidence has gone unnoticed, for much of it would be highly conspicuous. Flooding, for example, often leaves erosional surfaces and layers of sediment in the profiles of archaeological sites. At one site we tested recently, flooding had eroded large portions of the shell midden and redeposited it in

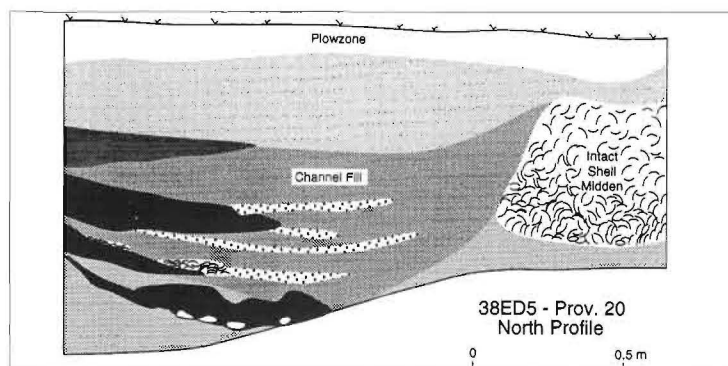
evidence for early 20th-century flooding. William Claflin, in his 1931 report on the Stallings Island site, records accounts of similar 20th-century events at several other sites.

Flooding undoubtedly was a regular nuisance to prehistoric river people, but the severity of floods has increased markedly in historic times. The vast acreage cleared for farming in the 18th and 19th centuries released tons of Piedmont clay into river drainages like the Savannah. Unable to carry these sediments all the way to the ocean, the Savannah River periodically unloaded its burden in the first convenient spot down river—the heart of Stallings settlement, the fall zone.

The flood situation during Stallings time does not appear to have involved

catastrophic events. Evidence for flooding includes normal depositional episodes, such as levee and point bar accretion, but not severe erosion. Stallings residences probably took seasonal floods in stride, moving temporarily to one of the numerous ridge top sites overlooking the river, like Mims Point.

If a single, catastrophic event cannot be blamed for the demise of Stallings, how about more gradual change? Perhaps slow, incremental declines in the availability of key food resources were at first tolerated, but eventually led to crisis levels. We might not expect such a process to be apparent in the ways people went about making a living,



Portion of an excavation profile at 38ED5 which illustrates the consequences of severe flooding. Intact shell midden (right) had been scoured out by an early 20th century flood chute (left) that subsequently filled with interspersed layers of clay, gravel, and redeposited shell midden. (SCIAA drawing)

two channel chutes. The channel fill was chock full of Stallings artifacts, fooling us into thinking we had discovered the telltale signs of an ancient catastrophe. However, the very bottom of this deposit told the true story. Among all the flaked stone tools and bone pins of Stallings age were two pieces of clear bottle glass, undeniable

that is, not before it was too late. But it ought to show up in the food resources they exploited.

Again, the evidence forces us to look elsewhere. During the five or so centuries spanning the establishment and florescence of Stallings Culture in the middle Savannah area, no obvious changes occurred in the types and proportions of resources exploited. Granted, we have not followed all possible leads on resource depletion, but those examined thus far suggest we are barking up the wrong tree.

If not the wrong tree, at least the wrong bark. Instead of environmental disaster pushing people out of their traditional homeland, we might consider how improvements elsewhere attracted their attention. This is the logic of geoarchaeologist Mark Brooks of SCIAA. In the 1980s, Mark and his former geology professor Don Colquhoun reconstructed sea-level changes on the South Carolina coast, changes which had both positive and negative consequences for prehistoric residents of the lowcountry. Taking this research one step further, Mark examined the response of Coastal Plain river systems to changes in sea level. Several lines of evidence suggest that upland tributaries of the upper Coastal Plain became less erosional and more depositional at about 3,500 years ago, a transition to modern floodplains that improved habitat for not only aquatic plants and animals, but also nut-bearing trees and organisms up the food chain, like turkey and deer. On balance, not a bad alternative to life on the big river.

More recent research by Mark Brooks and pond ecologist Barbara Taylor has suggested that sustained upland settlement was possible long before the establishment of modern floodplains. Their study subjects are Carolina bays, the enigmatic upland

wetlands that dot the Coastal Plain province of the South Atlantic region. Mark and Barbara have marshaled abundant ecological and archaeological data to demonstrate that many bays were well-watered throughout human prehistory. Accordingly, bays offered reliable supplies of fresh water and aquatic food resources, as well as

microhabitats for broad-leaf trees in an otherwise pine-dominated landscape.

So life in the uplands was not only possible throughout prehistory, but at times highly desirable. The immediate descendants of Stallings Culture thought so, as did a variety of other prehistoric groups. But members of Stallings Culture did not. Instead, they remained tightly tethered to riverine sites. Something besides food and water must have kept them there, for these basic resources indeed were plentiful elsewhere.

Putting Stallings decisions into broader context, we have to consider cultural factors that transcend economics. Among them are the symbolic power of places of origin, or ancestral homes. The namesake site, Stallings Island, in the middle Savannah River, may have been one such place. Besides the obvious fact that it was occupied so intensively during the Late Archaic period, Stallings Island has a much higher density of human burials than shell midden sites of comparable age. Thus, this "island of the dead," according to C. C. Jones, may have been "designed to perpetuate . . . the



Aerial view of a Carolina bay in the Aiken Plateau. Prehistoric Indians occupied upland wetlands as these throughout prehistory, although they appear to have been passed over for river sites during the Stallings era. (Photo by Barbara Taylor)

devotion which the Indians of this region cherished for the peace, the security, the memory of the dead." Whereas Jones's sentiment of 1861 should not be taken too literally, in its capacity as a cemetery of sorts, Stallings Island undoubtedly held sacred significance to its people.

Stallings burials provide not only a reminder of the symbolic influence of place, but our best insight into the consequences of a stationary lifestyle. As the old adage goes, you are what you eat. For the skeletal biologist, this is more than a metaphorical quip. Registered in the bony tissue of ancient people are evidences of diet and health. Bones also record the personal histories of trauma, work habits, and degenerative disease. There is perhaps no better source of data on how adapted a people were to their environmental, social, and cultural circumstances.

Collecting such data on Stallings burials was the job of bioarchaeologist Kristin Wilson. As Kristin quickly learned, the data would be few. Although over 80 skeletons were

**See STALLINGS CULTURE, Page 8**

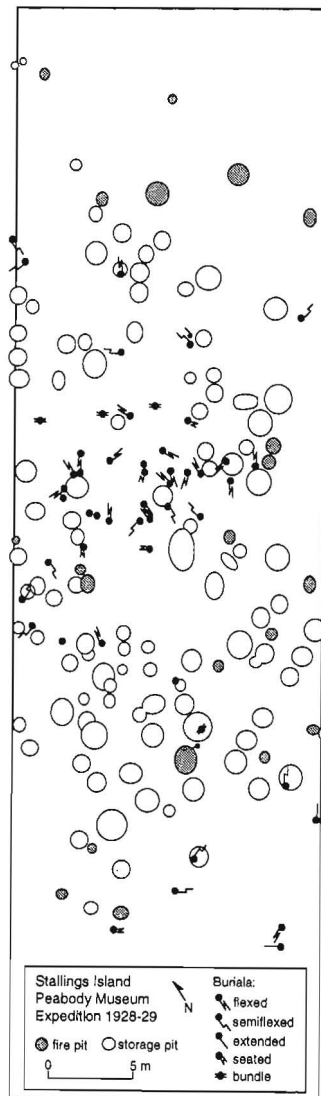
## STALLINGS CULTURE, From Page 7

recovered in the early excavations of Stallings Island, three factors intervened to reduce the sample to only a couple of dozen individuals. First, only half of the skeletons recovered from the 1928-29 expedition of the Cosgroves was curated at the Peabody Museum at Harvard, sponsor of the dig. Second, several of the curated skeletons dated to later prehistoric occupations. Third, many of the skeletons were incomplete, owing, in large measure, to the methods of excavation, which, by today's standards, were woefully inadequate.

To increase her sample, Kristin traveled to Washington D.C. to examine skeletons from the 1951 excavation of Lake Spring, a shell-midden site 12 miles up river from Stallings Island. The 11 individuals from Lake Spring curated at the Smithsonian Institution were mostly Late Archaic in age, but of uncertain cultural affiliation. Radiocarbon dating and careful review of provenience data revealed that most of the individuals were pre-Stallings Late Archaic. Although this did little to bolster the Stallings sample, it provided an important point of reference for the biological health of Stallings predecessors, people who maintained a more mobile lifestyle.

The contrasts in biological health between pre-Stallings and Stallings subgroups are illuminating. Compared to their predecessors, Stallings individuals exhibited higher levels of dietary stress, trauma, and degenerative illness. Particularly curious is the relatively high level of iron-deficiency anemia in the Stallings group. Fresh-water shellfish offer above average levels of iron, so iron deficiency is unexpected among habitual shellfish eaters. To explain this dilemma, Kristin points out a number of systemic factors that may have

compromised the metabolic uptake of iron. Among them are the effects of parasitic infections, ailments common among people who, for lack of mobility, find themselves in constant association with accumulating garbage.



Dozens of human skeletons were exhumed in the 1928-29 excavations of Stallings Island. As shown in this plan of the 60 by 210-foot excavation, burials were concentrated in the central portion of the block. (SCIAA drawing after Claflin 1931)

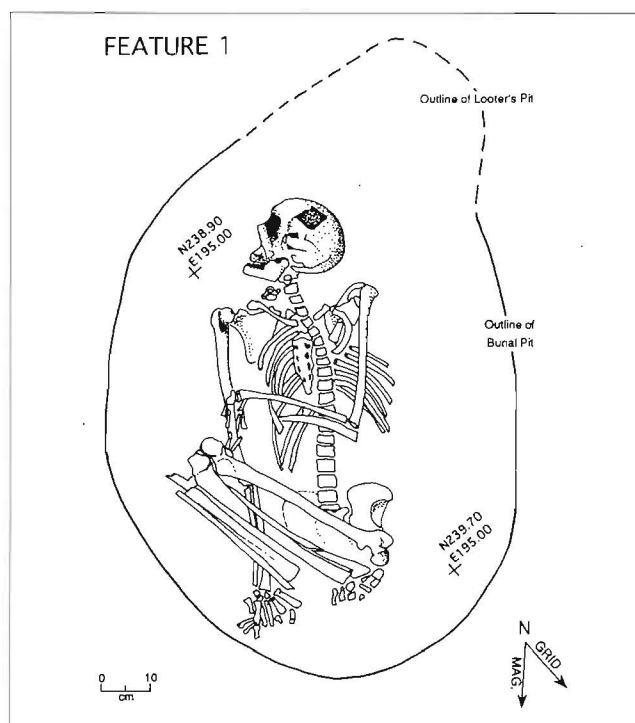
In addition to showing how much worse off Stallings individuals were than their forebears, Kristin's research suggests that the brunt of Stallings life was not shared equally. Incidences of infection and trauma were much more

common among Stallings women than among men. Limits to sample size notwithstanding, the contrast between the sexes is remarkable. Importantly, Kristin's data tend to corroborate the reconstructions of social organization I reviewed in an earlier installment in this series (see *Legacy* Vol 2, No. 1, 1997). If, as I argued, Stallings society was organized by matrilineal postmarital residents, women would have been permanent residences of riverine shell-midden sites, and hence more subject to parasitic infection, while the men they married would have included members of more mobile, neighboring groups.

The differences between men and women in terms of biological health underscores that one's experience as a participant in Stallings Culture depended on one's social identity. Health consequences along lines of gender suggest that significant disparities may have been felt at the household level. More broadly, with a system of unilineal descent, disparities within households may have extended to the realm of kin group or lineage. For instance, were men routinely serving the economic needs of households to which they were related only through marriage, or did they continue to serve the households of their blood line? This is hardly a trivial matter for societies whose economic well being and long-term survival depends on the social alliances of descent and marriage.

The balance of evidence points to the distinct possibility that Stallings Culture fell victim to its own social rules. If so, we cannot stop at its borders to fully appreciate this process, for any culture is created and reproduced in relation to other cultures. In this respect, research must continue to situate Stallings Culture in the regional milieu of Late Archaic





Field drawing of a Stallings burial. Looters had uncovered the skull in their search for artifacts, prompting archaeologists to recover the remains before further damage was inflicted. Despite the unfortunate circumstances of recovery, this individual added important knowledge about the biological health of the Stallings population. (SCIAA drawing)

societies elsewhere. When Stallings Culture cleaved, it no doubt did so along planes of kinship. Where members of respective lineages ended up depended perhaps on preexisting alliances with outside groups, some on the coast, others in the mountains, still others in adjacent river valleys. The complete history of Stallings Culture therefore ranges well beyond the middle Savannah area to encompass vast portions of the greater Southeast.

The story of Stallings decline unfolds on another front. As if its demise 3,500 years ago wasn't enough, Stallings Culture faces a second fall these days at the hands of looters and relic seekers. In their reckless digging to collect a few stone tools or bone pins, looters compromise the contexts and associations that enable archaeologists to reconstruct the details of ancient lifeways. Each of the many Stallings sites I have discussed in this series has been badly vandalized,

some continue to be.

Fortunately, we have been able to salvage a great deal of information from the scraps left by looters. Our success in this regard is due in great measure to the hard work of dozens of volunteers, as well as the institutional support of outfits such as the U.S. Forest Service, the Department of Energy, Augusta State University, and of course SCIAA and its Savannah River Archaeological

Research Program. The financial support of these agencies and programs has provided a firm foundation for sustained research, but it is not enough. Each salvage operation in the field results in thousands of artifacts and even greater quantities of feature matrix that require painstaking sorting and analysis. Laboratory costs outweigh field costs at least fivefold. Radiocarbon, faunal, and floral analyses are particularly costly.

If you have enjoyed this series on Stallings Culture, perhaps gained a better appreciation for how archaeological research can produce rich details about the past, then please consider donating to this project through the Archaeological Research Trust. Perhaps we can work together to stave off the second fall of Stallings Culture through wise management of its archaeological traces and development of knowledge that only scientific investigations can provide.

## A REMARKABLE FIND(ER)

By Kenneth E. Sassaman

Every archaeological field crew has its ringer. For crews of the Stallings Archaeological Project, that individual is Kevin Eberhard. A perennial volunteer of the Savannah River Archaeological Research Program (SRARP), Kevin has a sixth sense about where to dig. He consistently comes up with the most unusual finds and the best features. Put Kevin to work in the least productive part of a site and he'll reverse fortunes.

Kevin's uncanny ability was evident again this summer when the SRARP co-sponsored a field school with Augusta State University at one of the area's Stallings shell middens. Working with student Patrick Lowe, Kevin had just completed excavating a level in a unit that intercepted the edge of a large looter's pit. In his typical nonchalant manner, Kevin brought to me a portion of deer antler that had been dislodged from a wall of the unit. Having recognized some modification to one end of the antler, Kevin suggested it was the handle to a knife. We had seen hafts like this one at other Stallings sites.

"Pretty nice," I remarked, half-jokingly, "but it'd be nicer if you had the stone blade to go along with it."

"Oh, we do," replied Kevin.

Sure enough, Kevin and Patrick had uncovered a quartz biface only a few inches from the haft. Its fit with the grooved socket on the haft was less than perfect, but I had little doubt they were a match. We all felt pretty good about the discovery and lots of picture taking ensued.

A few minutes later Kevin found the real blade. Less than one-half inch below the surface of the previous level, directly in position to be accepted by the grooved end of the haft, was a stemmed chert biface. The fit was perfect.

Although our goal in excavating Stallings sites is to recover information, not artifacts per se, it is hard to downplay a find such as this. It is truly one of a kind. Remarkably, looters had missed the antler by only a few inches. I suspect most looters would not have recognized it for what it was; some professionals may have missed its significance, too. That's why we need volunteers such as Kevin Eberhard around.



Hafted biface found by Eberhard. (Photo by Ken Sassaman)

# A Case Study in the Scientific Method: Historic Amerindians in Tobago, West Indies

BY Christopher Ohm Clement

Archaeology is the scientific study of past human cultures. Although we borrow analytical tools from many disciplines in our effort to understand the past, the most basic tool of the archaeologist is common to all sciences: the scientific method. In the hard sciences, the scientific method involves conducting experiments and examining the outcome. In its archaeological application, we hypothesize various activities that may have taken place in the past, deduce what kinds of material remains may result from those activities, and then hope to find those material remains through excavation.

I recently had the opportunity to practice a clear-cut example of this method on Tobago, a small island in the southern Caribbean. Although it was sighted by Columbus on his third voyage of discovery in 1498, permanent settlement of Tobago did not occur for another 150 years. Instead, the island became a pawn of European politics. Claimed variously by France, Holland and England, among others; in fact Tobago was a refuge for various Amerindian groups fleeing encroachment by European immigrants to the Caribbean. In 1757, just before permanent settlement, Captain Richard Tyrrell of the HMS *Buckingham* reported that the island was occupied by "about 300 families of Indians." Some of these he described as a "flat headed tribe" while the others he described as "red indians," indicating that both Caribs and Arawaks, the two

major Amerindian groups in the Caribbean at contact, lived on the island just prior to its settlement.

Permanent European settlement of Tobago was initiated by the British in 1763. They immediately established a plantation economy based on sugar and cotton production, and utilizing African slave labor. By 1770, the

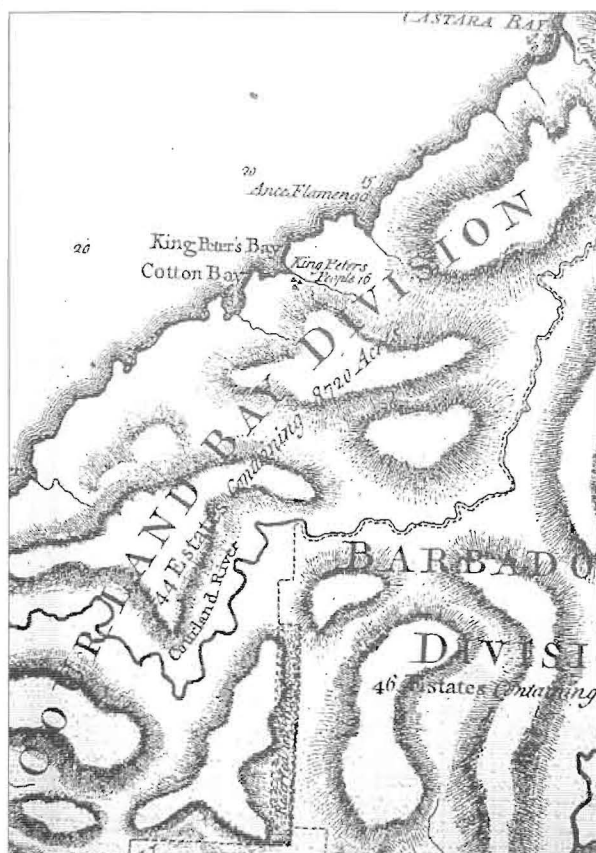
ment, much of the island remained untouched. Although 35,134 acres had been cleared by the end of the 18th century, another 39,266 acres remained in old growth rain forest, much as it had in the pre-settlement era.

When I began researching sugar plantations on Tobago in 1992, one of my stated goals was to locate and

excavate slave villages. Slave villages have often been the focus of archaeological research in the southeastern United States and in the Caribbean because archaeology is one of the only means we have to understand such "disenfranchised" groups. The vast majority of slaves in both areas were illiterate. In this kind of situation, where written records are rare or absent, or were produced primarily by observers of a culture (rather than by participants in the culture), archaeologists can make a unique contribution to historical knowledge. Since no slave villages had been excavated on Tobago, I intended to conduct such excavations and compare the recovered material to other areas. I discovered that, on Tobago, slaves mostly utilized goods manufactured by Europeans, though whether these goods were supplied to the slaves by

their owners, or were bought by slaves using money they had earned through participation in the local economy, remains unknown and is a subject for future research.

In addition to a reliance on European goods, however, I also discovered that slaves on Tobago



Portion of Thomas Jeffreys' map of 1778 showing the location of "King Peter's people."

population of the island was 238 whites and 3,164 slaves; ten years later the white population was 474 while the slave population was 10,701. By 1799, Tobago produced 7,939 tons of sugar for export to Great Britain, more than any other British Caribbean colony. Despite this rapid develop-

possessed small amounts of pottery that were locally made. I expected a great deal more. On Antigua, for instance, slaves produced their own ceramics in large quantities. These pots were made of local materials, but were built using methods that were common in Africa, and in forms that also appeared to be African in origin. Similarly, on Barbados slaves used potter's wheels to make pottery for their own use, a technique they learned from the Europeans. On Tobago, however, the pottery recovered in the slave villages was indistinguishable from that made by the Amerindian inhabitants of the island prior to settlement by the British. The question then became: where had this pottery come from?

A variety of possibilities exist. First, the pottery encountered in Tobago slave villages may indicate an earlier occupation of the sites by prehistoric Amerindian groups. This seems unlikely, however, because the pottery appears in all three of the slave villages I've investigated on the island. Slave villages tend to be located on agriculturally marginal land because of planter efforts to maximize cane production. Such land would have been unsuitable for settlement to the Amerindian population given their reliance on horticultural production. The hypothesis can not be rejected out-of-hand, but there are more likely explanations. A second possible explanation is that the slaves on Tobago learned to make pottery from the Amerindian groups with whom they shared the island. This hypothesis also seems unlikely as pottery making was common in Africa.

A final hypothesis, that the pottery was made by Amerindians and traded into the slave villages, seems the most promising since Amerindians did live on the island during the historic



Stream valley leading to King Peters Bay. (Photo by Christopher Ohm Clement)

period. A variety of sources document this occupation. The earliest is a map of the island by Thomas Jeffreys, published in 1765, which indicates that several Amerindian groups were present in various parts of the island. A second Jeffreys map, published in 1778 continues to show an Amerindian presence. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Sir William Young, who owned a Tobago estate and would later become the Governor of the island, writes in his journal of a trip to the island in 1791-92. He states that:

*Riding out, I paid a visit of some length to the red Charaibe families, of whom Louis is the head; two of the young women were really handsome. The old Indian dress is lost, and they wore handkerchiefs, cotton petticoats, and jackets like negroes. The huts were scarcely weather tight, being wattled and thatched, crowded with all their filth and all their wealth. The latter consisting of nets for fishing, hammocks for sleeping in, and different sorts of provision, stores etc. etc. Beasts, stores, and people all in one room.*

Given that Amerindians were present on the island during the historic period, the question then becomes, what was their relationship to the broader plantation society? This is a question that can only be answered through archaeology since with a few enlightened exceptions such as Sir William Young above, it is unlikely that the island's Amerindians had significant interaction with the European planters on the island. Contact with the slave population, however, is a different matter, as the two groups were roughly on a social and economic par. Almost certainly, there was at least some trade between the groups, and in fact, the documents suggest this. Young, writing in 1811 when he was Governor of the island, points out that "mulatto hucksters" could be encountered all over Tobago plying their wares. He is not specific about what these wares may have been, but he is very specific about what was used to carry them: Carib baskets. Perhaps these same types of baskets are what the Amerindians used for storage in their "wattled and

**See AMERINDIANS, Page 12**

## AMERINDIANS, From Page 11

thatched" huts. Certainly some type of containers would have been necessary, if only to prevent the animals with which they shared the huts from eating them out of house and home.

Using grant money from USC's Research and Productive Scholarship Program and from SCIAA's Robert L. Stephenson Archaeological Research Fund, I investigated three Amerindian sites on Tobago in October, 1997, in order to determine whether they might be historic Amerindian occupations.

Two of these sites are located on King Peters Bay, on the northwest coast of the island. This area was selected for study because it is one of the locations occupied by Amerindians specified by Thomas Jeffreys in 1778. The third site, also on the northwest coast, is located on Culloden Bay. It is not suggested as an Amerindian village in the historic documents, but it has yielded ceramic sherds in the past which some researchers associate with the Carib, the culture Columbus encountered in the Lesser Antilles.

The material recovered from these sites has not been fully analyzed, and I have not drawn any final conclusions about the project. However, only one of the sites, TOB-64 on King Peters Bay, yielded artifacts of European manufacture as well as

Amerindian ceramics.

This is what I would expect to encounter on a historic Amerindian site if trade was indeed occurring between the Amerindians and the plantation slaves; the European material was traded into the Amerindian population in exchange for manufactures produced by the Amerindians.

Unfortunately, a few

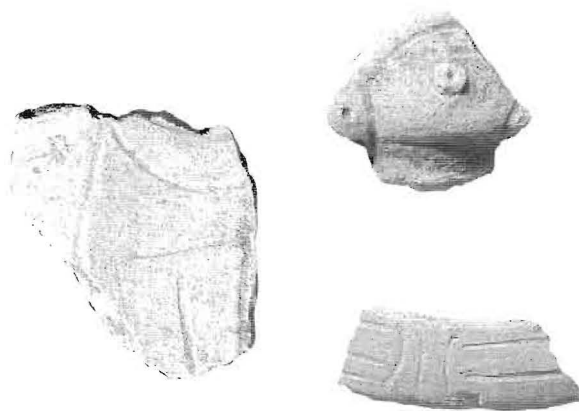
excavations yielded only European material, indicating that the European material covers an area that is larger than that covered by the Amerindian material and that a historic European occupation may be adjacent to the Amerindian village site. As a result, the conclusion that TOB-64 was occupied by Amerindians during the historic period can not be justified solely on the basis of presence/absence of European material at the site.

This does not mean that the project did not meet its stated goals, however. All of the material, from all three sites, will be fully analyzed in the upcoming months. I will report the results of that analysis in a future issue of *Legacy*, but what I will be looking for is a change in the style of pottery made by the Amerindians. If, as I believe, slaves and Amerindians interacted on a regular basis on Tobago during the historic period, then some changes to both cultures will have occurred. These changes are more likely to be apparent in Amerindian artifact assemblages because the Amerindian population was so much smaller than that of the slaves. One possibility is that, if Amerindians were making pottery for trade into the slave

villages, they may have taken less care in production in their efforts to make sufficient amounts to supply the vastly larger slave population. This change should be visible in the archaeological record by less carefully crafted and/or decorated ceramics during the period that trade was occurring. Thus, it is change in pottery style that I will be looking for during analysis.

To conclude this essay, I should get back to the scientific method as used by archaeologists. In the previous paragraphs I presented the hypothesis that historic Amerindian groups resident on Tobago traded with the slave population. Based on that hypothesis, I deduced two possible material signatures of such contact. First, that historic Amerindian villages would contain material of European manufacture that was received in trade from slaves. Second, that there would be decreased care in pottery production to meet the increased demand. The first deduction could be neither proved nor disproved because TOB-64, the most likely candidate for a historic Amerindian village, was occupied by Europeans (or possibly slaves) as well as by Amerindians. Separating these components, based on the amount of excavation conducted, is unlikely,

though further research focused on finding and excavating distinct features containing unequivocal associations of European and Amerindian material may still be possible. That is a task for the future. The second deduction, that of ceramic change, must await full analysis of the material already in hand.



Ceramics recovered from TOB-64. (Photo by Christopher Ohm Clement)



# Archaeological Research Trust

Formerly *PastWatch*, Newsletter of the Archaeological Research Trust Endowment

## Chair Notes

By **Lezlie Mills Barker**

The best endings are the ones that pave the way for strong beginnings. As I end my year as Chair of the Archaeological Research Trust, I leave thankful for the opportunity to be involved in the work of the Trust and excited about our opportunities for the future.

We have worked hard this year to increase public awareness of the Trust and are already beginning to see results from our efforts. I would like to thank everyone who has generously supported the ART Endowment. Since our inception in 1992, the Trust has been fortunate to count on the support of many individuals. Thank you, for your commitment to South Carolina archaeology and for your belief that the ART Endowment is the best way to guarantee that there will be reliable long-term resources available to fund archaeological research in South Carolina.

Using the income from our endowment, we were able to award nearly \$6,000 this year to fund new

research and provide support for several ongoing projects. The November board meeting is traditionally when the board reviews award applications and determines which requests to fund. All of the award requests we received were for good, solid projects, and it was disappointing not to be able to fund each of them. I was pleased though, with the diversity of the requests and feel that they illustrate the unique role that the Trust can play in funding. It will always be important for us to award funds for ongoing projects, but we must remain open to providing the seed money for projects that could lead to new discoveries or serve as stepping stones to major funding.

I am pleased to welcome our new board members and officers for 1998. The new board members are Lou Edens from Mt. Pleasant, Grayson Hanahan from Charleston, Cyndy Hernandez from Mt. Pleasant, Sandy Nelson from Lancaster, Emerson Reed from Charleston, and Esther Shirley from Landrum. The board will benefit greatly from their experience and enthusiasm. The board



Lezlie Mills Barker, Chair of the Archaeological Research Trust Board. (Photo by Olga Bowles)

Chair for 1998 is Andee Steen from Heath Springs and Vice Chair is John L. Frierson from Lexington. I look forward to working with all of them next year as Past Chair.

This has been a great year for me. I have had the opportunity to meet and work with so many interesting and dedicated people. A special thanks to all of you for your guidance and your support. Together we have helped pave the way for a strong and successful future.

## THE PUMPKIN SITE UPDATE

By **Tommy Charles**

Dr. Gary Crites of the University of Tennessee has almost completed analysis of the ethnobotanical materials from archaeological site 38GR226, the "Pumpkin" site. Dr. Crites informs me that he has found domesticated chenopodium seed in samples from two features. This is the earliest evidence of prehistoric domestication of cultigens yet discovered in South Carolina and as such is a major find.



Chester DePratter mapping the Pumpkin site. (Photo by Tommy Charles)



# Rock Shelters in South Carolina

By Andee Steen

Lancaster and Kershaw counties contain many geological oddities, some so distinct that early on they acquired names. Among the more notable ones are Forty-Acre Rock, Flat Rock, Anvil Rock, Hanging Rock, Kelly Rock, Tank Rock, and Oven Rock. Several of these rock formations are rock shelters. *Webster's Dictionary* defines a rock shelter as "a shallow, cavelike area occupied by Stone Age peoples."

The first humans, Paleoindians, arrived in the area perhaps as early as 12,000 years ago.

They were nomadic hunter/gatherers who, in addition to gathering plant foods and hunting small animals, also hunted large and now extinct animals such as mastodon, mammoth, giant ground sloths, elk, bison, and other creatures that grazed on the green grasses and roamed the vast forests. The first

humans used stone for the manufacture of their spear points, knives, and scrapers and probably made use of the rock shelters as places to live.

One such rock is Kelly Rock, located on the side of a high ridge above a branch of Beaver Creek in Kershaw County. Local legend says the rock was named after a deserter who hid under it during the War Between the States.

There are numerous prehistoric

sites near Kelly Rock. The earliest diagnostic artifact is a fluted point that dates to the Paleoindian period, approximately 10,000 to 12,000 years ago. Other stone tools and clay pottery found indicate periodic occupation of the sites during the Early Archaic period (10,000 to 7,500 years ago), Middle Archaic period (7,500 to 5,000 years ago), Late Archaic period (5,000 to 3,000 years ago), Woodland period (2,500 to 1,000 years ago), and Mississippian period (1,000 years ago to European contact).



Kelly Rock Shelter. (Photo by Andee Steen)

Intricately decorated Mississippian pottery can be found on several of the sites. Historic artifacts are also present on these sites.

Tank Rock is another rock shelter located on a narrow ridge between two branches of Cedar Creek in Lancaster County. Tradition says an old shoe-maker named Tank inhabited this shelter and used a table-like rock for his shoe bench.

On September 15, 1900, an article

titled "Tank Rock" appeared in *The Lancaster Ledger*. The following was taken from that article: "Mr. Tom McNinch visited the Tank Rock. It is in Cedar Creek Township about two miles west of Anvil Rock. It is on a hillside and forms the roof of a room about 20 by 25 feet and 8 feet high. The floor is decomposed granite and in one corner is a table-like rock about 3 by 2.5 feet."

The archaeological sites around Tank Rock have prehistoric and historic components. A bola stone, which is thought to date to the Paleoindian period, was found near Tank Rock. Other stone tools and clay

pottery found indicate periodic occupation of the sites during the Early, Middle, and Late Archaic, and the Woodland periods. Historic cultural materials observed were 19th and 20th century ceramics, blue and green glass, buttons, brick, nails, and fragments of iron pots and skillets.

The old folks say the Oven Rock, often referred to as the Indian Rock, was

once utilized by Indians. It is near the Anvil Rock and is a still greater sight to look at. The Oven Rock is located in a wooded area and ground visibility is near zero. No date for human occupation has been established for chronologically diagnostic artifacts have not been found.

Called a natural phenomenon which appears to be "just hanging," Hanging Rock is the best known shelter in the area. In August, 1780, a

Revolutionary War battle took place near the rock, and Sherman's army camped near it in February, 1865, on its long march through the South.

Many well known 19th century sightseers, such as John Drayton, Robert Mills, and Benson Lossing, visited and wrote about Hanging Rock. Lossing, who traveled through the region about 1850 visiting Revolutionary War sites, wrote: "...Sumter and his companions fought a desperate battle about a mile and a half eastward. Along a by-road, across the high rolling plain upon which (at Cole's Old Field) tradition avers the hottest of the battle was fought, I rode to the brow of a deep narrow valley, through which courses Hanging Rock Creek. The ingled sound of falling waters and grinding mill stones came up from the deep furrow, while from a small cabin by the roadside, upon the verge of the steep bank, I heard a broken melody. I entered the cabin, and there sat an aged Negro dining upon hoecake and bacon, and humming a refrain. He was the miller, Charley. He told me that he was more than eighty years old, and remembered seeing "de red coats scamper when massa Sumter and Jacky M'Clure pitched into 'em!" Pointing to the celebrated Hanging Rock upon the opposite side of the stream, 'Dar' he said, 'a heap o' red coats sleep de night afore de battle, and dar I hid de night arter." Lossing described Hanging Rock noting: "It is a huge conglomerate boulder, 20 or 30 feet in diameter, lying upon the verge of the high east bank of the creek, nearly 100 feet above the stream. It is shelving toward the bank, its concavity being in the form of the quarter of an orange paring, and capacious enough to shelter 50 men from rain." Robert Mills wrote that it was capable of only sheltering several persons and "it

seems fires have been kindled there."

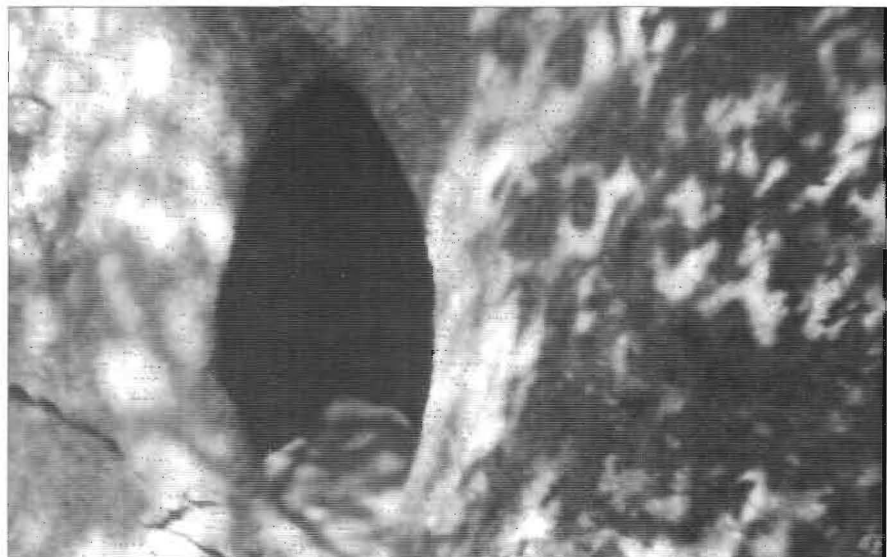
In 1856, W. R. of Pleasant Hill, a writer for *The Lancaster Ledger* stated: "Its edges are tinged with smoke, which is supposed to be caused by fires kindled there, by hunters and by the Catawba Indians, for I have heard my mother say, that she recollected when they used to camp under it in traveling to Camden."

John Drayton described Hanging Rock as "a far greater curiosity than the Great Flat Rock (Forty-Acre Rock), or even the 'Rockhouse,' with its beautiful cascade."

Prehistoric and historic components are present on the sites near Hanging Rock. Several have said that a fluted point was found on one of the sites, but this has not been verified. The earliest conclusive diagnostic artifact is a Dalton point that dates to the Early Archaic period, approximately 10,000 years ago. Other stone tools and clay pottery indicate periodic occupation of the sites during the Early, Middle, and Late Archaic periods, and the Mississippian period. Historic cultural materials observed were buttons, marbles, blue and green glass, nails, brick, fragments of iron pots and skillets, 19th and 20th century

ceramics, and Union musket minie balls.

In 1802, John Drayton published a book, *A View of South Carolina as Respects Her Natural and Civil Concerns*, in which he describes his visit to the headwaters of the Lynches river (eastern and southern Lancaster county). Drayton gave an excellent description of a rock shelter he called the "rockhouse" but not its location. The following is his depiction: "The rockhouse is composed of two large flat rocks, leaning against each other at top; forming a complete shelter from the sun and rain. The area of the shelter may be about 90 feet in circumference, remarkably dark and cool. A beautiful cascade of water tumbles from the side of the hill on which the rockhouse stands. At the lower end of it is an aperture, from which a small stream of clear water issues forth; falling over the rocks below, into the valley. This spot is highly romantic. The rocks rise in rude piles above the valley, to the height of about 250 feet; crowned occasionally with red cedar and savin. We were informed of several other curious rocks and caverns, situated in the vicinity..."



Oven Rock Shelter. (Photo by Andee Steen)

# The South Carolina Petroglyph Survey

By Tommy Charles

The author of the following paragraph is unknown to me but I quote it from "THE WORLD IS YOURS," The Smithsonian Institution Radio Program, Sunday, October 25, 1936. The program was aired over the NBC Blue Network.

## *"Mysterious Indian Carvings Arouse Riotous Speculations"*

*"Mysterious carvings made on boulders, cliffs, and cave walls by American Indians attracted the attention and aroused the speculations of white men soon after their arrival on this continent. Since then, speculations have continued to run riot, and the work of scientists has advanced but slowly."*

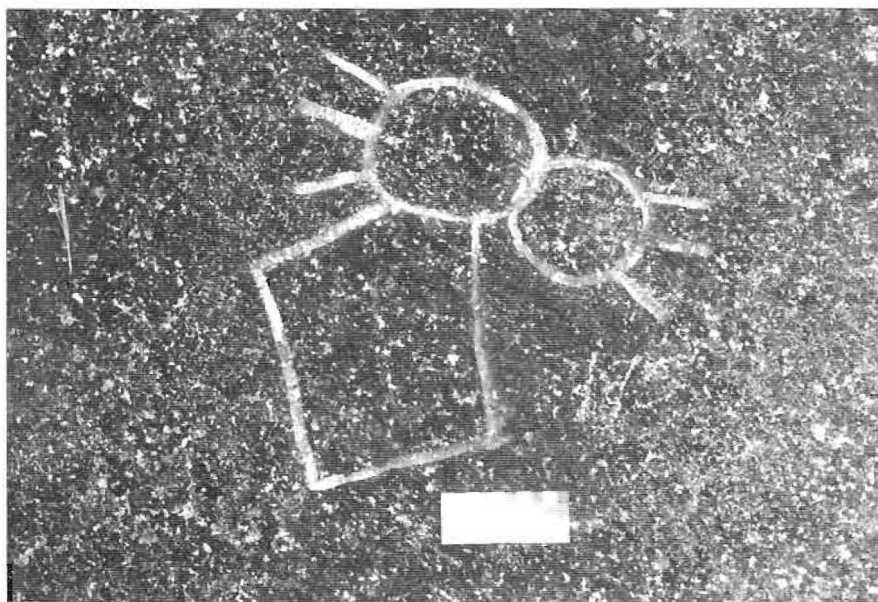
Petroglyph, a Greek word that means rock writing, is often used to denote any carving or inscription on rock. Rock paintings are often called petroglyphs when, in fact they are pictographs, a closely related Greek word meaning picture writing.

Pictographs denote that type of writing in which objects and events are represented pictorially on any kind of surface, including rock. In South Carolina, we need only concern ourselves with petroglyphs, as any paintings made by prehistoric humans, have long since fallen victim to our inhospitable climate. On the other hand, modern-day pictographs, or "graffiti," are abundant and have found their way onto every conceivable surface.

When we think of petroglyphs we most often think of those made by American Indians of our western states, or the natives of Australia or Africa, as those are the places where petroglyphs have been best docu-



Greenville County petroglyph found near a mid-18th century trading post in the 1920s when land was being cleared. (Photo by Tommy Charles)



Detail of Gauly Falls Petroglyph site, Pickens County. (Photo by Tommy Charles)

mented and subsequently the public is more aware of their presence. However impressive the carvings of these areas, petroglyphs are not limited to them: similar carvings are found on all continents except Antarctica, occurring almost everywhere rock is available.

Petroglyphs are found in every region of the United States. In the western states large areas of arid, sparsely vegetated landscape have made the discovery of petroglyphs relatively easy and thousands have been found there. In the wooded eastern states they are more elusive. Dense vegetation may hide an entire rock formation, algae and lichens often obliterate the carvings, hiding them from all but the most intense inspection. There is no way to know how

rock carvings in the eastern states compare numerically with those of the west, but it is safe to say that relatively few of the total number of eastern carvings have been discovered.

What is the meaning of petroglyphs? All sorts of theories have been proposed for the origin and meaning of rock carvings. Some individuals propose that they may prove that Egyptians, Babylonians, Hebrews, Greeks, Romans, Chinese or other Old World peoples migrated into the New World much earlier than we think. Others have speculated that the carvings are associated with those imaginary cradles of civilization, the "lost continents" of Atlantis and Mu. Some have sought to use petroglyphs to prove that the Garden of Eden was in America. An excerpt from "THE WORLD IS YOURS," states that "An amateur expedition, with more money and enthusiasm than scientific training and caution, once spent thousands of dollars in an attempt to show that all systems of writing and all civilizations of the world had their origins in the sage-covered valleys of western Nevada." More current and popular

myths are that rock carvings represent treasure maps and/or the presence of buried treasure. Surely some of the prehistoric rock carvings were done with a purpose, but certainly they did not indicate the location of buried treasure. In the American West it is known that some were made for religious purposes, others are associated with puberty rites, others represent rain clouds, clan marks, etc., but many are simply abstract figures having no discernible meaning. The creation of petroglyphs is not limited to prehistoric peoples. In South Carolina both ancient and recent examples occur.

Please continue to keep your eye out for any unusual carvings you might encounter on your property. I can be reached at the Institute at (803) 777-8170.



Gauly Falls Petroglyph site, Pickens County, South Carolina. Rock face has nearly 200 drawings in association. (Photo by Tommy Charles)

## THE PETROGLYPH SURVEY UPDATE

By Tommy Charles

On November 12, I hosted a walking tour to the Gauly Falls Petroglyph site for local Greenville and Upstate residents, which was a great success despite the rainy evening. I spent two days before the tour mapping with a transit over 198 drawings on this one site adjacent to the beautiful Gauly Falls located on the Table Rock Resort property, owned by David and Judy Wilkins. There will be further discussion of this site and other petroglyphs sites that have been discovered since February of 1997 in the next issue of *Legacy*.

Also, I was guest lecturer at the annual conference of the Society for Georgia Archaeology, October 17-18. The topic was "The South Carolina Petroglyph Survey." The conference was held at the University of Georgia, Athens. While there, I also gave the lecture to a class in the University's Anthropology Department.

A symposium titled "Story in Stone: Rock Art of the Carolinas Piedmont," will be held on January 31, 1998 from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the Museum of York County in Rock Hill, South Carolina. The symposium is being sponsored by the Museum of York County, Schiele Museum, the Catawba Indian Nation, and the Archaeological Society of South Carolina. Please contact Cindy Abrams at the Museum of York County (803) 329-2121 for more information.



Detail of Gauly Falls Petroglyph site, Pickens County, South Carolina. (Photo by Tommy Charles)



# SCIAA Researchers Funded by ART

By Nena Powell Rice

On November 13, 1997, the Board of Trustees of the Archaeological Research Trust made decisions to fund five SCIAA research projects. These awards simply would not have been possible without support from the Archaeological Research Trust. On behalf of the Board, I wish to thank all of our donors who have contributed to the ART Endowment. The following projects were funded by the earnings of the ART endowment:

**Allendale Paleoindian Expedition.** Albert Goodyear received \$1,277 to fund the underwater archaeological investigation in Smiths Lake Creek on the Allendale Archaeological Expedition. These ART funds will support the Underwater Archaeology Division in conducting fieldwork for three weeks during the Allendale Paleoindian Expedition in May 1998.

**Le Prince Research Project.** James D. Spirek received \$1,430 for the *Le Prince* Research Project. The purpose of this project is to locate the remains of the French corsair, *Le Prince*, shipwrecked on the Port Royal Sound Channel sandbars in 1577. The funds will be used to initiate an archival research trip undertaken by Mr. John de Bry, who is a French archival specialist. It is anticipated that Mr. de Bry will find material relating to the outfitting of the ship, goods it carried, and perhaps even documents relating to the wrecking incident. Researchers hope to learn through archival research, along with published sources, about the events surrounding the corsair's voyage, as well as gaining insight into the archaeological materials that may be present in the shipwreck's assemblage.

**The "Pumpkin" Site Archaeological Project.** Tommy Charles received \$500 for the "Pumpkin" site project. These funds will supplement a previous ART award to help pay for carbon-14 dates from ethnobotanical data recovered from the "Pumpkin" archaeological site (38BR226). Analysis of the remains is being conducted by Dr. Gary Crites, University of Tennessee. The Pumpkin site is a prehistoric American Indian village site of the Middle Woodland cultural period, which dates approximately AD 400-600. The excavation of this site represents the most extensive excavation ever conducted of a Middle Woodland site in the South Carolina Piedmont. Dr. Crites states that the data from the ethnobotanical samples are the best he has seen from this part of the southeast—and the first from South Carolina. He suggests that when analysis is complete, a joint publication of the findings should be reported in the *Southeastern Archaeological Conference* journal.

**Stallings Archaeological Project.** Kenneth Sassaman received \$1,515 for radiocarbon dates for the Stallings Archaeological Research Project and the Soapstone Vessel Dating Project. Funds will be used for two conventional dates on bone collected from the disturbed contexts at the Chew Mill

and Strange shell middens on the Ogeechee River. Although these sites were destroyed by looters, sherd assemblages salvaged from the spoil form the largest samples available from these shell middens. Funds will be used for the third radiocarbon date, an assay on soot from the surface of a soapstone vessel sherd from the Iddins site in east Tennessee. Since 1995, Sassaman has collected 11 AMS dates on soot from soapstone vessels to revise the chronology of this important technological innovation. The results to date have shown that soapstone vessels were not the technological precedent for early pottery in the Southeast, a finding that reverses conventional thinking about the sequence on vessel technology. A more in-depth explanation of this project will occur in a later issue of *Legacy*.

**Pritchard Shipyard Project.** Christopher F. Amer received \$1,000 to fund graduate student, Jeff Hughes, from the USC Department of Anthropology to catalogue and conduct laboratory analysis of the approximately 28,000 artifacts excavated during the 1993 field season at the Pritchard Shipyard site. Pritchard Shipyard was probably one of the largest colonial shipyards in South Carolina, located on Hobcaw Creek near Charleston in 1753. The 7.5 acre property on which the historic shipyard is located, now owned by Cyndy and Pepe Hernandez, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and is considered to be one of the more important archaeological sites in the state.



Newly-elected ART board member Cyndy Hernandez works alongside SCIAA archaeologists and volunteers to uncover the colonial shipyard located on Cyndy and Pepe Hernandez's property. (Photo by Christopher F. Amer)



# A Turkish Odyssey

By Nena Powell Rice

From October 9 to 26, 1997, I led 12 people to the beautiful country of Turkey, in Asia Minor. Our entire group was from South Carolina. I was joined by my husband Marion Rice, Sandy and Astrid Rippeteau, Frances Perkins, Basil McGirt, Eleanor Deierlein, and Pat Gilmartin from Columbia, Mary Ann Hester from Greenville, and Nancy and Randal Swan, Emily Bellaveau, and Patricia Dwight from Charleston. Patricia Dwight was our escort, as she has lived in Turkey and has led over 30

where the Byzantine empire flourished in the 11th and 12th centuries. We spent one day hiking through Ihlara Canyon exploring some rock churches with brilliant frescos that have been beautifully restored. We then drove south out upon the Anatolia Plain, stopping at a large, famous caravanserai, and at Konya, home to the Whirling Dervishes and where one of the world's great mystic philosophers—"Mevlana" Celaleddin Rumi—is buried in the

Mevlana Complex. We continued south through the beautiful lake district and into the Taurus Mountains down to the south coast of Turkey at Antalya.

We spent another day exploring the interesting ruins of Perge and Aspendos in the Pamphylia Plain, then traveled along the rugged, beautiful Turquoise Coast, stopping at the Roman ruin of Phaselis; the St. Nicholas Church in Demre, where St.

Nicholas was buried in the 8th century; the charming Turkish village of Kas with its fascinating Lycian tombs carved out of the high rocky slope above; and finally made our way to Marmaris, where we boarded a Turkish gulet for the next six nights.

We sailed back to the east to the Roman ruin of Caunos and the intricately carved rock tombs at Dalyan, then back to Marmaris for protection from intermittent storms. Patricia took half of



Randal and Nancy Swan, Sandy and Astrid Rippeteau, Marion Rice, and Idin, our guide to Tree House Rock Church in Ihlara Canyon. (Photo by Nena Powell Rice)

the group with her to Bodrum, while the other half stayed on the boat. By boat we visited Bozburun, where they make the gulets; the charming fishing village of Datcha; and the Hellenic site of Knidos, before sailing into the gorgeous harbor of Bodrum, the site of ancient Halicarnassus. We visited the Mausoleum, one of the seven ancient wonders of the world, and the Castle of St. Peter, which now holds Bodrum's famous Museum of Underwater Archaeology.

We spent a full day traveling to Kusadasi, stopping at the wonderful sites of Didyma, Miletus, and Priene. We ended our journey into Turkey at Ephesus, one of the best-preserved classical Roman cities in Turkey, with a quick stop at the Virgin Mary's House. The archaeologist of Ephesus, Çengiz Içten, took us on a private tour behind the scenes to the "Terrace Houses" or the wealthy residential houses, where exquisite restoration is currently being undertaken on the frescos, mosaic tile floors, and sculptures. It was the highlight of the trip.



Detail of restored mosaic tile floor in the home of a wealthy resident of Ephesus. (Photo by Emily Bellaveau)



Turkey group standing in front of Aya Sofya. Nena Rice, Randall Swan, Mary Ann Hester, Nancy Swan, Pat Gilmartin, Patricia Dwight, Emily Belevau, Eleanor Deierlein, Basil McGirt, Frances Perkins, Tosun Bengisu, Sandy and Astrid Rippeteau. (Photo by Marion Rice)

trips there. She also handled all of the arrangements through her business, Adventure Travel in Charleston. We had a direct flight from New York to the capital city of Istanbul, arriving the next morning. Our local guide, Tosun Bengisu, met our flight in Istanbul and stayed with us throughout the 18-day trip. In Istanbul, we visited the Blue Mosque, Aya Sofya, Topkapi Palace including the Harem, and the Archaeological Museum.

We flew to Keyseri in the heart of ancient Cappadochia and spent a couple of days traveling through this fascinating landscape of unusual volcanic tuff-formed "fairy chimneys,"

# Underwater Archaeology

Formerly, *Flotsam and Jetsam*, Newsletter of the Underwater Archaeology  
Division of SCIAA

## Sea and Swamp Craft: The Utility of Canoe and Canoe-built Vessels in the Lowcountry

By Lynn Harris

Early travelers in South Carolina, like John Lawson, discuss a variety of canoes and more spacious canoe-built vessels (also referred in historical literature as dugouts, periaguas, pettigours and perrigaers) which were poled, rowed, sailed, and paddled through the lowland waterways. Lawson describes his African guide paddling a canoe "...the most difficult Way I ever saw, occasioned by Reason of the Multitude of Creeks lying along the Main, keeping their course through the Marshes, turning and winding like a Labyrinth." These narrow-beamed, shallow-draft, maneuverable vessels were extremely useful watercraft for the swampy, riverine

network of the low country rivers when roads and bridges were still poor or non-existent.

Traders shipped huge loads of animal hides from the settlement of Dorchester down the Ashley River to Charleston in periguas propelled by both sails and oars. A perigua rowed

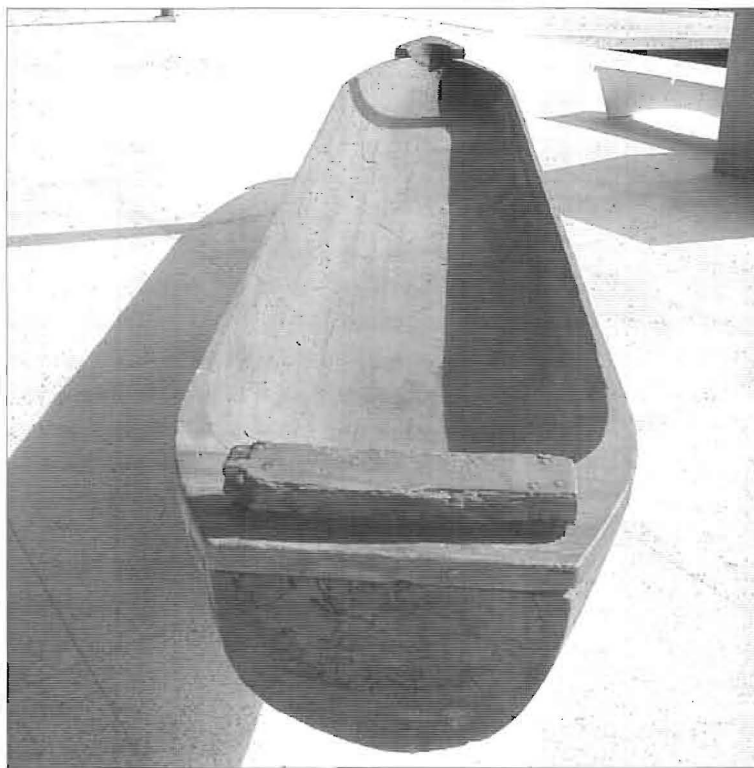
by a crew of seven or eight slaves could carry a cargo of 500 to 700 deerskins. A common sight at trading venues like Dorchester was a busy wharf dotted with periaguas and

make the larger canoe, or periagua, the sides of the log were built up with planking, or two logs were joined along the keel line giving the boat additional beam for cargo without

significantly increasing its draft. Fifty to 100 barrels of tar or rice could be ferried along shallow creeks and shoals in these vessels. They were frequently equipped with one or even two portable masts for sailing and often ventured out into the open water. A great deal of information on the boats used by the native Americans and the early traders is contained in the early journals and documents of the *Commissioners of Indian Trade*.

Canoes also served as versatile work boats. In later years, a visitor to Charleston discusses how an entire class of "fishing

Negroes" had emerged replacing the Indians as masters of the plentiful waters around South Carolina. These fishermen handlined their catch to the surface (often weighing between 12 to 15 pounds), harpooned them, and then hauled their catch into dugout canoes. A person aboard a ship anchored near



Historic dugout on display at the Santee Canal State Park. (SCIAA photo)

schooners landing and loading their cargoes, and merchants and planters conducting business transactions. In return for these deerskins, merchants traded a variety of items with the Native Americans. This included guns, gunpowder, agricultural implements, liquor, and clothing. To

the confluence of the Cooper and Ashley river in 1817 found himself in the midst of "twenty-five dug-outs each containing four Negroes who were having excellent fishing as one might well desire on the eve of Good Friday." These dexterous canoe fishermen apparently provided steady profits for colonial slave owners.

On plantations, canoes were popularly used by boathand slaves who were often kept apart from house and field slaves. Boat hands had access to outside information and contacts, knowledge of the surrounding landscape, and relatively more freedom in their movements. Letters written by planters living along the Cooper River suggest that valuable African patroon's (boat captains) had sole responsibility of a particular boat, despite laws to regulate registration of the boat under a white patroon's name. Newspaper advertisements reveal that these plantation canoe craft varied considerably in size and were often brightly painted. A 1737 notice in the *South Carolina Gazette* describes a cypress canoe of 15 feet by 8 inches long with a beam of 4 feet which had a white bottom, yellow sides, black gunnels, and storm sheets painted Prussian blue. Black canoe crews from different plantations sometimes rowed against one another in races.

Frequent references to these watercraft are made in a number of historical documents. Canoes were some of the most popular vernacular vessels used in the southeast during the 18th and 19th centuries for general transportation, fishing, scouting, piloting, recreational, and plantation purposes. Quite possibly, canoes represented a combination of boat-building cultures of the Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans who came from coastal or riverine areas. Long before the Europeans or



Illustration of Indian method of making a dugout canoe. (Drawing by John White)

Africans arrived in South Carolina, Native Americans carved dugout canoes using fire and stone tools. African slaves came from coastal and riverine environment in Sierra Leone and Angola where boats were also important commodities.

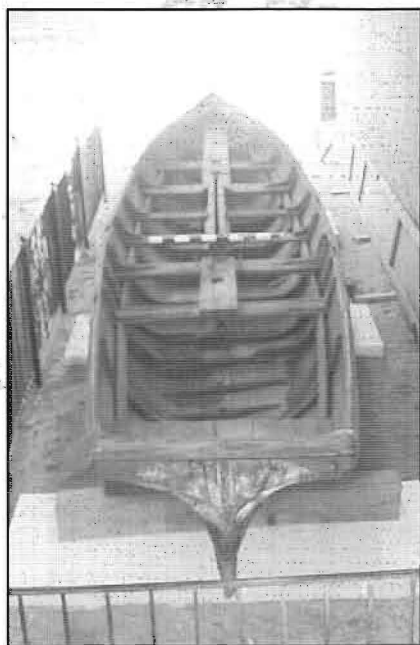
Lawson describes how the vast cypress trees, of which "...the French make canoes...are innumerable between the French settlement and Charleston." Another reference about the French in the Caribbean islands states that "...the French learned from the Savages to hollow out trees to make canoes—they did not learn from them to row them, steer them, or to jump overboard to right them when they are overturned wetting their clothes, losing anything, or drowning, but most French fear all these things...everyday one sees disastrous accidents." While the ethnic complexity and exact origins of canoe-building may be too difficult unravel, it is most likely that these building practices merged through time to represent the South Carolina tradition. An important part of the story about these vernacular craft is how they were used here and the social and economic

interactions that these vessels symbolize.

Two of the best preserved examples of large sailing plantation canoes are those which are part of the Charleston Museum collection recorded by SCIAA during weekend workshops for divers and non-divers—the *Bessie* and the *Accommodation*. The *Bessie*, exhibited in the courtyard, was donated to the museum by Arthur Middleton Manigault. It was used on White Oak plantation on the North Santee River in the mid 1800s. With dimensions of 29 feet in length by 5 feet 10 inches in beam with a plumb bow and wineglass-shaped stern, the *Bessie* exhibits qualities that suggest it may have been used for sailing in the harbors and sounds as well as in the rivers. Other structural features include a centerboard trunk (possibly added at a later date), seats, two mast steps, half frames, and knees.

The *Accommodation* is stored in a shed on Dill plantation on James Island. This boat has a length of 28 feet 2 inches in length, and a beam of 5 feet. Two logs forming the lower hull are joined along the centerline and

**See CANOES, Page 22**



Historic period sailing canoe, the *Accommodation* stored at Dill Sanctuary, owned by The Charleston Museum. (SCIAA photo)

exhibit evidence of gauge holes.

Twenty-three small framing and floor members 1 and a half to 2 inches in thickness run along the length of the vessel. Seven seating thwarts are located approximately 2 feet, 7 inches apart. The second seat from the bow has a hole in the middle which may have been utilized for a removable mast, awning pole, or cargo loading boom. Extra strakes were added above the logs to increase the free-board. Museum notes reveal that the *Accommodation* was used on the Waccamaw River and that W. G. Hinson, whose name is stenciled into the stern, paid \$150 for it in 1855.

Our SCIAA database lists a total of 19 canoes located underwater in local rivers like the east and west branches of the Cooper River, the Edisto, Waccamaw, Wateree, and Combahee rivers. Examples of a variety of canoes types can be viewed by the public at locations such as Santee Canal State Park, Middleton Place, the South Carolina State Museum in Columbia, the Charleston Museum, and the Horry County Museum.

## Hunley Update

By Christopher F. Amer

"Moving forward on the Hunley" read the lead editorial in the November 3 edition of Charleston's *Post and Courier* newspaper. The South Carolina *Hunley* Commission met on October 30, 1997 in Charleston. The main item on the agenda was to establish an eleemosynary corporation called "Friends of the *Hunley*" that will oversee the raising of some \$10 million to fund and endow the project. Plans at present are to raise, conserve, and curate/exhibit the submarine. The Commission also discussed various possible locations for a permanent home for the *Hunley*. Experts agree that the vessel, when raised, should not be subjected to excessive transportation that may damage the hull and its contents. To date, both the Patriot's Point Maritime Museum, located in Mt. Pleasant, and the Charleston Museum have expressed interest in taking on the project. Once the Commission and US. Naval Historical Center agree on a site, the recommendation will be sent to the SC General Assembly for final approval. Senator Glenn McConnell, Chairman of the *Hunley* Commission, anticipates a decision in the legislature during the next session.

The US Naval Historical Center, the SC Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, and the *Hunley* Commis-

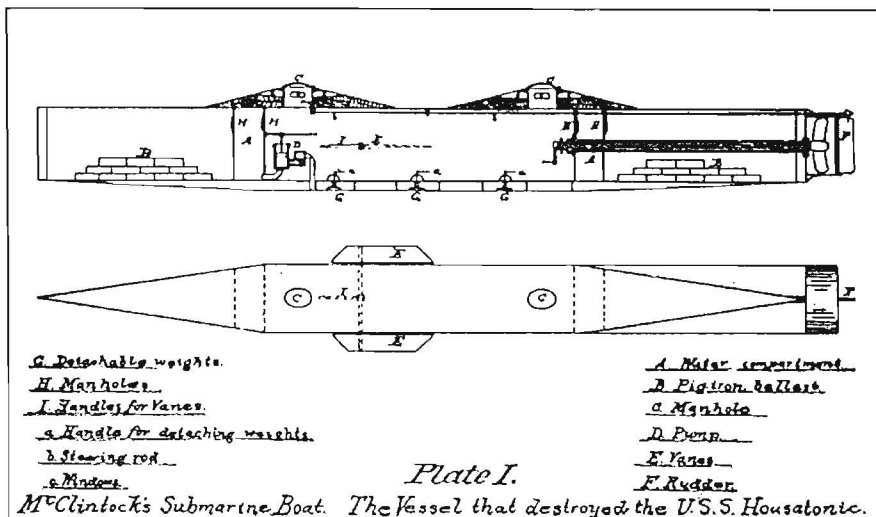
sion are currently working on the scopes of work to set the standards and parameters of future work on the submarine. These documents cover the various stages of the project, and include the archaeology, lifting, and transport to a conservation facility, as well as requirements for the building of a conservation facility, excavation of the interior of the boat (remember, the *Hunley* appears to be filled with sand), conservation of the hull and contents, appropriate treatment of the remains of the crew, and exhibition and long-term curation of the boat. Requests for proposals will be published in the *Federal Register* and interested and qualified parties who desire to conduct work on the project may submit proposals.

Currently, the Commission anticipates raising the *Hunley* at the turn of the millennium. Many factors will come into play to determine when the raising will be undertaken, not the least of which is having the necessary funding available and a conservation facility built and operational prior to the hull being removed from its protected location.



Top view of snorkel box and stub of the port snorkel. (Photo by Christopher F. Amer)





Drawing erroneously labeled the *Hunley*, but is actually the *American Diver*, McClintock's second submarine. (Courtesy of the US Naval Institute; researched by Mark Ragan)

The Institute has been working with a naval architect to anticipate necessary requirements to safely lift the hull without sustaining damage to either the structure or interior of the boat. Calculations of the combined weight of hull and contents, including the wet sand, range from approximately 21-25 long tons. The low number is based on a 1/4-inch hull plate thickness traditionally used in descriptions of the *Hunley*. The 25 ton figure takes into account a 5/8th-inch thickness of plate. After the Civil War, James McClintock wrote to captains in the Royal Navy in Halifax detailing the measurements and features of his three submarines, the *Pioneer*, *American Diver*, and the *H. L. Hunley*. Evidently McClintock's intent was to garner interest in his work from that quarter. In that letter McClintock states:

"I modeled her [*Hunley*], and built Expressly for hand Power. This Boat was of an Elliptical (sic) Shape, with modeled ends. And looked similar to Surf, or Whale Boats, placed one on top of the other. She was Built of Iron 5/8 inch thick, 40 feet long top and bottom, 42 inches wide in the middle, & 48 inches high, fitted with Cranks

Geared to her Propeller, and turned by 8 persons inside of her. And although she was a beautiful Model Boat, and worked to perfection. Yet like her Predecessors, the Power was too uncertain to admit of her Venturing far from Shore. This Boat was taken to Charleston, SC, and destroyed the Sloop-of-war *Housatonic*, Myself nor the Sub Marine's Gallant Commander, who lost his life in demonstrating... considered there was any danger in going out and destroying any vessel. But the danger was in having sufficient Power to bring the Boat Back. I would here state I do not believe the Sub Marine Boat was lost in the operation of destroying the *Housatonic*, But was lost in a storm which occurred a few hours after. I am aware the Federals has made diligent Search for her, And have made three different reports of having found her. Yet no descriptions that I have ever read are correct." [brackets added] (ADM 1/ 6236, Public Records Office, British Admiralty, Surrey, England)

Note—A transcription of the complete text of McClintock's letter will appear in a later update.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED IN UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECTS

By Lynn Harris

Are you SCIAA Underwater Archaeology Field Training certified, and do you feel comfortable working in low visibility riverine conditions? Do you have underwater photography and videography skills? If you do, you might be interested in participating in some upcoming projects in the Lowcountry. The SCIAA Underwater Archaeology Division has recently received a grant from the South Carolina Humanities Council to start a photographic inventory of a diverse selection of shipwreck sites in Charleston, Dorchester, and Berkeley counties which will be used as visual aids as part of a State Maritime Web page. The virtual diving experience will also benefit those non-divers who have never had the pleasure of wallowing in our murky river waters and experiencing history on a first-hand basis. In addition, we hope to have links to lists of literature references, historical scenes, and technical drawings which will serve as a South Carolina bibliography for maritime archaeology and history scholars.

An Underwater Heritage Trail Project in the West Branch of the Cooper River has received financial assistance from the National Recreational Trails Grant Program in cooperation with the SC Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism and Federal Highway Administration of the US Department of Transportation. A submerged plantation watercraft and dock structure, a sea-going sailing craft, a Revolutionary War shipwreck, a postbellum towing barge are the types of underwater resources included on the trail. Steps will be taken to enhance safety, accessibility, and public educational potential of these sites. For example, it will entail installing permanent mooring buoys near each structure, publishing brochures with information about the trail, and preparing laminated underwater maps that will be used to orient scuba diving visitors to the site. Public volunteers, we hope, will play an active role in assisting SCIAA in creating the trail and in continued routine maintenance.

Please contact Lynn Harris in Charleston at (803) 762-6105 or Jim Spirek in Columbia at (803) 777-8170, if you are interested in working with us on either of these projects.



# SCIAA's Underwater Archaeology Division Completes First Phase of the Port Royal Sound Survey

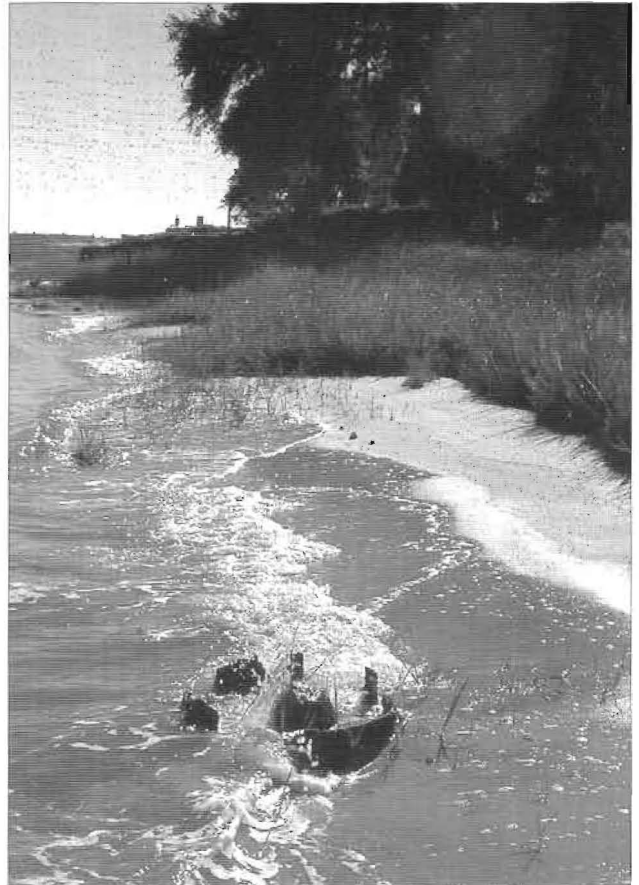
By James D. Spirek and Christopher F. Amer

The Underwater Archaeology Division of the SC Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of South Carolina is currently undertaking a comprehensive inter-tidal and submerged cultural resource survey of Port Royal Sound. Funded in part by a National Park Service Historic Preservation Survey and Planning Grant, administered through the SC Department of Archives and History, the project is under the direction of co-principal investigators James D. Spirek and Christopher F. Amer, assisted by Division personnel Lynn Harris, Joe Beatty, and Carl Naylor. Laura Von Harten, a local maritime historical researcher specializing in the fishery industry of Port Royal Sound, is a consultant to the project. Additionally, the project is supported by local institutions and groups, as well as by individuals, interested in the maritime history of the sound. The survey began this summer and will continue until August 31, 1998. Research components to complete the project will be implemented as funding permits.

The mission of the Port Royal Sound Survey-phase one, is to study and develop the historical, archaeological, and geographical context of the region's prehistoric and historic maritime past. Research methods include locating archival documents and historical references, reviewing the Archaeological Site Files and Hobby Diver reports for previously documented sites, studying maps and remote imagery, among other research avenues to build a database of known and potential archaeological sites in the project area. Besides relying on

texts and pictures, we will interview local watermen, divers, and others who are familiar with underwater and inter-tidal features such as unknown obstructions, snags, rock piles, pilings, landings, shipwrecks, and other items of interest. The information assembled through this research will provide a baseline of information by which to plan and conduct field work to record archaeological sites in and along the periphery of the sound.

The fieldwork for the first phase of the project is largely complete. Field methods for phase one included conducting aerial reconnaissance of the sound's shoreline and implementing a pedestrian survey, supported by small boats, along the shoreline, both accomplished during low tide. During the three-week-pedestrian survey more than 60 archaeological sites were newly located, or re-visited. Previously unrecorded sites were documented, i.e., measured drawings and photographed, for inclusion in the State Site Files. With the assistance of John Peterson, on loan to us from Steve Smith's Cultural Resource Consulting Division, the latitude and longitude of



A barrel well associated with Fort Frederick, a colonial fort built ca. 1730s to 1750s, overlooking the Beaufort River. (Photo by Christopher F. Amer)

the individual sites was recorded using a hand-held GPS unit. A GIS-compatible computer database, composed of information relating to a site, will be constructed for analysis and managerial purposes.

Based on the gathered research and field data the project team will demarcate areas for planned marine remote sensing operations, for the, as yet, unfunded phase two of the project, to locate submerged archaeological sites. Criterion to determine areas for survey include proximity to known historical activity or archaeological sites, information acquired from watermen and divers, and geographi-

cal features or ship "traps," i.e. sandbars and shoals. Using funds appropriated through the South Carolina General Assembly 1997 legislative session, the division has purchased an integrated marine data-gathering system. The ensemble, which is being custom designed by Sandia Research, Inc. in New Mexico, will consist of a cesium magnetometer, a side scan sonar, a DGPS unit, and a digital fathometer. Incoming electronic data obtained during the survey will be processed by an on-board computer system using proprietary software from Sandia.

Following the electronic survey, we will process the magnetic, acoustic, bathymetric data and devise GIS overlays in order to analyze and prioritize anomalies for visual inspection. Equipped underwater archaeologists and volunteers will ground-truth targets to identify and record those anomalies that are archaeologically significant.

By these means, the division will begin to construct a comprehensive inventory of inter-tidal and underwater archaeological sites in the sound that include shipwrecks or abandoned water craft, landing and wharf remnants, prehistoric sites, and other materials on state-owned bottom lands. The division will use the gathered information to develop guidelines for the preservation of these cultural resources; for example, addressing issues concerning access and suitability of a site's recreational, educational, or scientific benefit to the citizens and tourists of South Carolina. Other management issues of concern include possible, or on-going, impacts to these resources due to development, erosion, and artifact collecting. Eligibility for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places or Areas will be determined for those

sites bearing historical or archaeological significance to the maritime history of South Carolina. The Port Royal Sound Survey will initiate a program of long-term and comprehensive regional surveys throughout South Carolina under the direction of the Underwater Archaeology Division of the SCIAA with the support of local organizations and volunteers.

One of the more interesting sites near Beaufort is a barrel well associated with Fort Frederick. The wooden barrels, of which only the top of the uppermost barrel is exposed, were placed one atop the other down to the level of fresh water to line the well and prevent it from collapsing. The close-fitting barrel staves would also deter salt water from contaminating the well

water. Because the barrel is exposed to the effects of current and boat wake, the crew stabilized the site against further erosion. A second site, located downstream, revealed the bottom planking and frames of an early 20th-century boat, possibly used in the oyster industry.

SCIAA wishes to thank those volunteers who flew the aerial reconnaissance with us, and who battled rain, deep pluff mud, and razor-sharp oyster shells, for helping make this first phase of the survey a success. If anyone has any information pertinent to this survey, please contact James Spirek or Christopher Amer at SCIAA (803)777-8170 or [spirekj@garnet.cla.sc.edu](mailto:spirekj@garnet.cla.sc.edu) or [amerc@garnet.cla.sc.edu](mailto:amerc@garnet.cla.sc.edu).



Hull fragments of a 20th century wreck on Cane Island on the Beaufort River. (Photo by Christopher F. Amer)

# The Mepkin Abbey Wreck: A Sport Diver's Experience

By Drew Ruddy

In the 1960s, some folks just didn't bother with a scuba diving certification course. They strapped on their gear, proceeded to the river, and swam around until they felt like they knew what they were doing. So it was with R. D. Densler, Jr., affectionately known as "Captain Bob" by the early South Carolina diving community.

By 1970, Captain Bob was the senior diver for the North Charleston Volunteer Rescue Squad. As the water was warming that year, he took a fellow rescue squad member, Don, on an "indoctrination dive" in the Cooper River near Mepkin Abbey. Although Don had never been underwater before, all was proceeding quite well as they reached the bottom of the anchor line. To maintain contact with the boat, the two held onto the anchor line and drifted down stream as the

anchor bounced gently along the hard marl. Don apparently maintained some semblance of comfort in this new environment until Bob changed the game plan.

Spotting an abandoned anchor line laying lazily on the bottom, Bob suddenly ventured away from the security of the link with the boat in hopes of recovering some fisherman's lost anchor. Bob followed the line into the "ribs" of an old wooden wreck. Meanwhile, Don's heart beat faster as he saw Bob leaving their anchor line, and suddenly he could take no more.

In his panicky effort to follow Bob, Don managed to fin Bob in the face, flooding his mask. In the minutes that ensued, both divers made it safely back to the boat where Don recovered from the experience of his first and, as far as I know, last dive.

Later, Bob phoned and told me of their escapades and about the wreck he had touched for only a moment. The following Saturday morning, we

bottom, the anchor line carried me directly to the port side of the wreck. I could not have kicked more than two strokes when I encountered a beautiful stoneware jug. With the almost surrealistic exhilaration of discovery, I retraced the route up the anchor line to bring the jug to the surface. In moments, Bob, Muck, and I were canvassing this approximately 50-foot long sailing vessel. It seemed to be

loaded with a cargo of assorted lumber of various shapes and sizes. In a short time, Muck located another jug and a "black glass" bottle toward the impressive mast step near the bow section.

Meanwhile, as I proceeded down the starboard side of the wreck, I could hear a scream from Bob as if he were in trouble, although I could not see him. As I moved to investigate his plight, I found him

amidships on top of the wooden cargo, pulling stoneware jugs from the rubble. I assisted in swimming them to the surface as he continued to discover them. At the end of our dive we had recovered two bottles, a hammer, and nine stoneware jugs. Subsequently, we returned to the wreck and Bob retrieved two more jugs, bringing the total to eleven.

I'm sure that it is quite evident that our approach to diving this wreck was anything but an archaeological endeavor. In fact, at that time, the state did not have an underwater



Drew Ruddy, Julian Muckenfuss, Bob Densler, and R. D. Densler, Sr. (Photo courtesy of Drew Ruddy)

were out at the crack of dawn to return to the site. Along for the occasion were Julian "Muck" Muckenfuss, who was Bob's longtime diving buddy, and Bob's father, R. D. "Papa D" Densler, Sr., as boat tender. When we arrived at Mepkin Abbey, Bob carefully sighted landmarks to anchor us over where he calculated the wreck to be. I enthusiastically geared up and proceeded down the anchor line to see if we were on the wreck. As I descended I could tell that the Cooper River was in its prime. Visibility was good and the current was minimal. As I neared the

archaeologist. The first law governing the recovery of underwater antiquities had only been passed about two years previously. The whole state of underwater archaeology might best be described as being in its embryonic stages.

Sensing that the Mepkin Wreck was of significance, I reported the finds to Dr. Robert L. Stephenson, then director of the SC Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology and one of the nicest men I have ever met. The information remained dormant for several years, when in 1978 Alan Albright, Ralph Wilbanks, and Darby Erd from SCIAA and myself returned to the wreck. It was a privilege to watch them scientifically map the wreck, as is evidenced when one reads Ralph Wilbanks' exceptional report. During this project, the sternpost and rudder, which had dislodged, was salvaged and taken by the state for conservation and study.

Today, more than 25 years since its initial discovery, I'm sure many divers have enjoyed observing the impressive features of this relic of our state's past, and perhaps felt the ambiance of its proximity to the beautiful banks of Mepkin. It is my hope that divers in the future may continue to enjoy this site as we continue to respect its historic significance. I would like to think that this story is an illustration of some of the benefits which can be derived when recreational divers and SCIAA work together.



Brother Stephen Petronek with pot from the Mepkin Abbey wreck. (Photo courtesy of Drew Ruddy)

## HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE MEPKIN ABBEY SHIPWRECK

By Lynn Harris

For several years the Mepkin Abbey shipwreck, thought to be an early 19th-century merchant vessel, has been used as a SCIAA Field Training site for the Underwater Archaeology Division. Scuba divers learn how to recognize ship construction details and interpret clues about the cargo and reasons for the demise of the vessel. The Mepkin wreck will also be part of the new Underwater Heritage Trail on the Cooper River due to open in Fall 1998.

In November 1980, the Underwater Archaeology Division spent two weeks mapping the wreck which is approximately 48 feet long with an 11 foot beam. The bow structure is comprised of a stempost and inner apron. The outer and false stem is missing. The sternpost and rudder were recovered for conservation and closer study. There are 18 floor timbers and 14 first futtocks which are joined at or pass under the keelson. The

vessel had one mast, stepped approximately 9 feet from the bow. The mortise for the saddle maststep, designed to straddle the keelson, had distinctive tool marks indicating that it was cut with an auger and chisel. An especially interesting construction feature of this vessel are the three notches on top of the keelson that were 5 and 1/2 feet apart and might represent the presence of stanchions in the major cargo area. These supports might have held a ridge pole for a tarp to cover the open cargo area. The boat was built from a combination of local woods—southern pine, live oak, and bald cypress.

The vessel was designed to carry a heavy cargo, probably between the plantation and the harbor, and perhaps even offshore. Her last cargo appears to be cut lumber, possibly cypress shingles. The wreck lies in proximity to former Mepkin plantation owned by the illustrious Henry Laurens—a wealthy planter,

merchant, and Revolutionary War leader. The records of his estate written in 1766, reveal that he owned a schooner called the *Baker* valued at 2,600 pounds and crewed by four slaves. This boat plied between Mepkin plantation and his wharf in Charleston. Although the *Baker* was rigged as a schooner, a letter written by Henry Laurens in 1771 describes how he had seen vessels with one mast of similar hull form to the *Baker* in Pennsylvania and Jersey. He had been told that this one-masted rig could save the labor and expense of one crew member, and furthermore, would gain some advantage in point of sailing. He then ordered that the *Baker* be immediately converted into a sloop rig. We do not know, at this point, if the Mepkin wreck is the *Baker*, but it does deserve some consideration.



# SCIAA ACTIVITIES

## South Carolina Archaeology Week 1997

By Nena Powell Rice

On September 27 to October 4, 1997, the archaeological community celebrated the 6th Annual South Carolina Archaeology Week. Throughout the month of September, archaeologists across the state offered nearly 65 programs, including conferences, lectures, demonstrations, open excavations, archaeology canoe trips, and exhibits. The week culminated once again at the 10th Annual Archaeology Field Day held at Sadlers Creek State Park near Anderson. The theme for the Archaeology Week poster this year was "Shell Rings of the Archaic". Open excavations were offered to the public at Old Dorchester State Park near Summerville, the Silver Bluff Trading Post near Aiken, the Catawba Indian Cultural Preservation Center near Rock Hill, and the George Bush American Revolutionary plantation site near Aiken.

One popular program that was repeated again this year was an archaeology canoe trip on the Congaree River in Columbia. On the banks of the Congaree River near the Gervais Street bridge, David G. Anderson, archaeologist with the National Park Service, gave a lecture



David G. Anderson talked about the prehistoric occupation of the Congaree River to 75 participants during SC Archaeology Week. (Photo by Marion Rice)

on the prehistoric occupation of the Midlands area on a rainy Sunday afternoon with over 75 participants of all ages in attendance. We then paddled four miles downstream to the Cayce Street Landing, and Natalie Adams of New South Associates gave a lecture on the historic occupation of the region including the recent discovery of Saxe Gotha, an early colonial town first settled in the early 1730s. Another very popular program was the excavations at Old Dorchester State Park which also included guided trips down the Ashley River Shipwreck Canoe Trail, recently established as part of the Heritage Corridor.

Depending on the movement of the tides, participants are able to excavate in the morning and canoe the Ashley river in the afternoon, starting from Old Dorchester and ending at Middleton Place near Charleston.

Old Dorchester State Park, the Catawba Indian Nation, and the Savannah River Archaeological Research Program continue to offer opportunities in the field and laboratory every second Tuesday of the month. Please contact me at the Institute for further information on how to become involved in these projects and others throughout the year.

*Legacy*  
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